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## World Notes

### THE GULF

## A Bridgehead to Fao



Caught off guard

The timing of the assault was hardly unexpected. For the past two years the Iranian army has launched a major rainy-season offensive across the marshlands of Al Huwaiza, north of the Iraqi city of Basra on the Shatt al Arab waterway. This year, on the anniversary of the day the Ayatullah Khomeini took power in 1979, the Iranians struck again. In the past, superior Iraqi armor and air power have repulsed waves of often youthful Iranian invaders. This time Iranian troops undertook a surprise of-

fensive farther south, enabling Iran to claim at least a momentary psychological victory in the 5½-year-old war.

By moving troops across the broad waterway, the Iranians were able to seize Fao, a deserted oil port badly damaged early in the war, and Umm al Rassas, an island about 40 miles from Basra. Iraq conceded that Iranian forces had established "a shaky foothold" in its territory but warned that the venture "faced a gloomy fate." At week's end the ultimate success of the Iranian assault was uncertain. But it was clear that whatever the outcome, the price would be high. Thus far the battle has claimed thousands of casualties on both sides.

### POLAND

## The Show Trial That Fizzled

Inside the Gdansk courtroom, the judge began trial proceedings last week with a few routine questions. He asked the defendant's profession (electromechanic); his salary (\$85 a month); and if he had any decorations. He did, including the Nobel Prize for Peace, and he had once been the leader of the banned Solidarity trade union. The defendant, Lech Walesa, was in court to answer charges that he had slandered members of several regional electoral commissions. His alleged crime: issuing estimates of voter turnout in Poland's parliamentary balloting last October that were lower than government figures.

Presumably, the regime of General Wojciech Jaruzelski had hoped that it could intimidate Walesa and his followers. But the Warsaw government backtracked when it became clear that the trial was turning out more absurd than intimidating. Invited by the judge to find an amicable solution, the state prosecutor offered to withdraw the charges if Walesa would make a statement that satisfied the commission members. Responded Walesa: "I had no intention of humiliating anyone." With that, the case was dismissed. Walesa noted that the compromise outcome was a "sign of hope."



Triumphant Walesa

### COUNTERTERRORISM

## Operation Hydrofoiled

Near dawn on Jan. 30, explosions rocked the Rodriguez Shipyards at Messina, Sicily. When the smoke cleared, two Palestinian-owned hydrofoil ferries were at the bottom of the harbor. Because the operator of the hydrofoils is known to be a supporter of Yasser Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization,

police at first theorized that the sabotage was the work of an anti-Arafat group. No such luck. Israeli undercover agents made it known last week that they were responsible for the blasts.

Israel, it seems, was convinced that the hydrofoils, each with a capacity of 150 passengers, had been sent to Messina to be fitted with guns and armor plating so they could be used to ferry Fatah guerrillas into the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, from which they were driven by Israeli troops in 1982. The plan, say the Israelis, was for Fatah fighters to make a dash for the Lebanese coast from Cyprus on the high-speed hydrofoils under cover of night. And how did the Israeli spooks who foiled the plan smuggle bombs into Italy? "You just come in as a tourist and bring what you need," said one source. "There are a lot of sophisticated ways of smuggling things in these days."

### WAR CRIMINALS

## Long-Delayed Date with Justice

Half-blind, senile, and emaciated from heart disease, Andrija Artukovic seemed oblivious as U.S. marshals bundled him aboard a JAT airlines flight to Yugoslavia last week. Only after staring hard at an illuminated sign in the plane that read FASTEN YOUR SEAT BELT in Serbo-Croatian did Artukovic, 86, speak. Said he:

"Now I know where I'm going." Indeed, his destination was a long-delayed date with justice. As Interior Minister in the puppet Nazi state of Croatia during World War II, Artukovic was known as the Butcher of the Balkans and held responsible for the murder of as many as 700,000 Serbs, Jews, Gypsies and others.

Artukovic took advantage of U.S. cold-war hostility toward Yugoslavia, among other things, to fend off extradition requests that began in 1951. He used false papers to emigrate to the U.S. in 1948, after first traveling to Italy, Switzerland and Ireland. Artukovic lived in California until his 1984 arrest and worked as a bookkeeper. The extradition order came less than an hour after U.S. Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist denied the aged Nazi's request for a stay. Unless his health prevents him from being tried for his crimes, his fate in Yugoslavia could be execution.



Artukovic arrives in Zagreb

### FRANCE

## Care for a Frog Tart, Monsieur?

When it comes to the size of his portions, the avid French gourmet usually avoids the gargantuan in favor of the *petit*. The merest taste of his favorite cuisine, he reasons, ought to be sufficient. No more. Last week French chefs banded together to challenge the world record for the longest buffet. The result of their labors: an 846-ft. table filled with an appetizing array of food. The creation was unveiled during a Mardi Gras celebration at the World Tourism and Travel Show in Paris and offered dishes representing all the departments of France, including the Indian Ocean island of Réunion. Two hundred chefs served up their specialties by the meter.

Some of the more interesting delicacies on the menu: pigs' feet cassoulet, beaver *confit*, stuffed goose's neck, eel gratin and frog tart. Other attractions were a 4-ft. 5-in. candied Eiffel Tower, a 10-ft. vegetarian paella dish and a gigantic cooking pot 10 ft. in diameter and 5 ft. deep. The buffet organizers topped off the pot presentation with a pinch of culinary cuteness: they had a jazz band called Haricots Rouges (translation: Red Beans) play music on top of it.